

**Joe Towson**  
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January 16, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20530

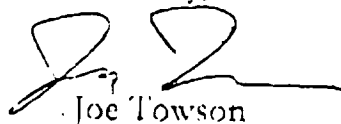
Dear Mr. Ashcroft,

I am writing you in support of Microsoft's decision to settle their antitrust case with the federal government. I think it is very fair, and goes beyond what was originally at the center of the dispute.

Microsoft made the decision to cede privileges to computer makers to give them the chance to reconfigure Windows before they ship it to consumers. This means that the computer makers can promote non-Microsoft software programs that compete with programs included within Windows. What's more, Microsoft made the decision to also cede protocols to other software companies in the hope that they will develop more streamlined software. Finally, Microsoft will not be allowed to retaliate against software or hardware developers who take advantage of these decisions.

I think this settlement should be approved so Microsoft can get back to business. I urge you to approve this settlement.

Sincerely,



Joe Towson

Cc: Senator Strom Thurmond